

## Cheshire East Virtual School guidance and support (Parents and Carers)

**Cheshire East Virtual School** is here to support you with any questions you have about children's education. CE Virtual School is here to support you with any questions you have about the **education and wellbeing** of young people in your care.

### Should young people be going into school during this period if they have been offered a place?

There is an expectation that young people who have a social worker will attend school, as long as it is safe for them to do so. In circumstances where a parent or carer does not want to send their young person to school, and the young person is considered vulnerable, **Cheshire East Virtual School**, social worker and school will explore the reasons for this directly with the parent or carer, and **help to resolve any concerns or difficulties wherever possible.**

If you are concerned about a young person attending school, please contact the Virtual School for advice and support.

These are the reasons why young people who have a social worker or education, health and care plan (EHCP) have been identified as benefiting from a school place:

- **Supporting the stability of their current school and home placement**
- **Preserving relationships with teachers for young people with insecure attachment**
- **Ongoing educational engagement and stability**
- **Wellbeing, familiar routines and peer group support**
- **Where school attendance provides support and minimises risky behaviours**

Here are some reasons why the young person or you might consider keeping them at home:

- **Their health**
- **Your health, particularly if you have an underlying health condition or are over 70**
- **You may be self-isolating because someone you have had contact with or in your household may have the virus**
- **They may be negatively affected by the changes in school**
- **There is a strong placement and all parties are confident that home education can be sustained**

The government has information specifically for parents and carers on their website:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/closure-of-educational-settings-information-for-parents-and-carers>

Guidance on vulnerable children and young people  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-vulnerable-children-and-young-people>

**We have produced guide with links to resources to help children continue to access online resources for learning and activities to complete from home.**

## What's happening with GCSE exams?

If children have been entered for **exams in Summer of 2020**, The Department for Education has stated that the over-riding aim is to be fair to students this summer and to make sure they are not disadvantaged in their progress to sixth form, college, university, apprenticeships, training or work because of these unprecedented conditions

School or college's will be asked to send **exam boards two pieces of information** for each of the subjects, based on what they know about each child's work and achievements.

School or college will consider a range of things like classwork and homework; results in assignments and any mock exams; any non-exam assessment or coursework that children might have done; and their general progress during your course.

This information will allow, with exam boards, to standardise grades across schools and colleges, to make sure that, as far as possible, results are fair.

Children might get the grades they were predicted earlier in the year, but not necessarily because teachers will want to make sure that they take into account all the progress that has been made since mock exams and how well individual children have done in recent assessments and tests.

**Cheshire East Virtual School** will be collaborating with **teachers** to arrive at the best possible outcomes. The grades that children receive will be their official GCSE results.

**When will children get their results?** Results will be out as soon as is possible – results won't be delayed after the dates they were expected in August.

Further information can be found:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2020>

## Advice and Guidance: Tips for parents, carers and guardians for supporting young people through this difficult time, including managing anxiety

### Resources to support wellbeing - Useful websites

#### The Anna Freud Centre

[www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/anna-freud-learning-network/coronavirus](http://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/anna-freud-learning-network/coronavirus)

### Helplines you can contact for help and advice in an emergency

#### Young Minds

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/get-urgent-help/#are-you-a-young-person-in-crisis?>

There is information about services local to Cheshire East including **Kooth and the CAMHS Young people's out of hours advice line** via Live Well Cheshire East Mental Health support

<https://livewellservices.cheshireeast.gov.uk/Search?CategoryId=74>

#### Become

The charity for care-experienced young people offers support and advice about the impact of coronavirus on young people's care.

<https://becomecharity.org.uk/for-young-people/care-advice-line/coronavirus-advice>

#### Samaritans

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

T: 116 123 (24/7, 365 days a year)

#### Childline (NSPCC)

[www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

T: 0800 1111

## Advice and Guidance: Looking after your child's Mental Health

### **Young Minds**

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/supporting-your-child-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

### **Headspace**

<https://www.headspace.com/covid-19>

### **Action for Happiness**

<https://www.actionforhappiness.org/>

### **World Health Organisation**

Mental Health Considerations during COVID-19 Outbreak

[https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af\\_2](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_2)

### **Anxiety UK**

Health And Other Forms Of Anxiety And Coronavirus

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/blog/health-and-other-forms-of-anxiety-and-coronavirus/>

### **Covid-19 And Anxiety – Part 2**

<https://www.anxietyuk.org.uk/blog/covid-19-and-anxiety-part2/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/health-52044339/coping-with-coronavirus-anxiety>

### **Mind**

Coronavirus And Your Wellbeing

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

### **Unicef**

How To Talk To Children About Coronavirus

<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-talk-your-child-about-coronavirus-covid-19>

<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/how-teachers-can-talk-children-about-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

### **OCD UK**

OCD and Coronavirus Top Tips

<https://www.ocduk.org/ocd-and-coronavirus-top-tips/>

**Cheshire and Wirral Partnership 24/7 Crisis Phone Line- 0300 303 3972 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) - Providing around-the-clock access to mental health support for the local population**

## Keeping children safe online

### Useful websites for Keeping children safe online

**NSPCC** - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/coronavirus-advice-support-children-families-parents/>

**Childline** - for support

**UK Safer Internet Centre** - to report and remove harmful online content

**CEOP** - for advice on making a report about online abuse

**Internet matters** - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

**London Grid for Learning** - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

**Net-aware** - for support for parents and careers from the NSPCC

**Parent info** - for support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online

**Thinkuknow** - for advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online

**UK Safer Internet Centre** - advice for parents and carers

## Mindfulness Games for Children

**Below are some games to try with your children to help with mindfulness and remaining calm. They are taken from the website Positive Psychology.**

<https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-for-children-kids-activities/>

### **Blowing bubbles**

Take time to slowly blow bubbles. Help the children to slow their breathing and steadily fill the bubbles with air. Encourage them to look closely at the bubbles as they fill up, detach and float away.

### **Playing with balloons.**

The aim of the activity is to keep the balloon off the ground but have them move slowly and gently. You can tell them to pretend the balloon is very fragile if that helps.

### **Blindfolded taste tests.**

Use a blindfold for each child and have them experience eating a small food, like a raisin or a cranberry, as if it was their first time eating it.

### **Mindful Posing**

One easy way for children to dip their toes into mindfulness is through body poses. To get your children excited, tell them that doing fun poses can help them feel strong, brave, and happy.

Have the children go somewhere quiet and familiar, a place they feel safe. Next, tell them to try one of the following poses:

**The Superman**: this pose is practiced by standing with the feet just wider than the hips, fists clenched, and arms reached out to the sky, stretching the body as tall as possible.

**The Wonder Woman**: this pose is struck by standing tall with legs wider than hip-width apart and hands or fists placed on the hips. Ask the children how they feel after a few rounds of trying either of these poses. You may be surprised.

### **Spidey-Senses**

While on the subject of superheroes, this can be a related “next step” to teach children how to stay present.

Instruct your children to turn-on their “Spidey senses,” or the super-focused senses of smell, sight, hearing, taste, and touch that Spiderman uses to keep tabs on the world around him. This will encourage them to pause and focus their attention on the present, opening their awareness to the information their senses bring in. This is a classic mindfulness exercise and encourages observation and curiosity—great skills for any human to practice.

### **Safari**

The Safari exercise is a great way to help kids learn mindfulness. This activity turns an average, everyday walk around the garden into an exciting new adventure. Tell your children that you will be going on a safari: their goal is to notice as many birds, bugs, creepy-crawlies, and any other animals as they can. Anything that walks, crawls, swims, or flies is of interest, and they’ll need to focus all of their senses to find them, especially the little ones.

**There are also lots of fun activities that you can do on the following websites:**

[https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities?gclid=EAlaIqObChMI\\_leO4de66AlViKztCh11xw9XEAYASAAEgLZb\\_D\\_BwE&gclidsrc=aw.ds](https://www.nhs.uk/change4life/activities?gclid=EAlaIqObChMI_leO4de66AlViKztCh11xw9XEAYASAAEgLZb_D_BwE&gclidsrc=aw.ds)

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/ks2-pshe/health-and-wellbeing-pshe-subjects-key-stage-2/health-and-wellbeing-pshe-subjects-key-stage-2>

## Virtual School Contact Details

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